1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

593 596 A person's rights in his or her *okka* are represented by twelve pebbles, euphemistically called 'twelve pieces of gold' (*pannaraṇḍachchi pon*). At marriage a girl loses most of her rights in her natal *okka* and obtains them in her conjugal *okka* instead. The bride's family friend transfers eleven pebbles to the groom's family friend. Eleven pebbles are transferred and not twelve. One pebble is retained by the girl's natal *okka* and this is because the bride retains some rights in her natal *okka*. She never loses them entirely. She has always a home from home. Her natal home is called *tā mané* (mother's home?), and a woman always feels tenderly towards it.

[606] A woman has a right to be maintained out of the funds of her conjugal *okka*. She is expected to do her share of domestic work under the guidance of the mistress of the house (*manépaṇikārti*). Not infrequently the mistress of the house is also her mother-in-law.

[422] [434] A woman is entitled to cultivate a patch of ground for ginger and turmeric, and to raise fowl and pigs, and the income from their sale is entirely *her* property which she may hold even against her husband or children. But she may work on this patch only after doing her share of domestic work for the day.[1]

593 596 587 The preference for leviratic unions helped in the assimilation of a woman with her conjugal family. The Coorg saw, 'I will not come down the steps I have climbed up', refers to the fact that once a girl entered her conjugal home she usually stayed there for good, marrying one of the brothers of the husband in the event of the death of the latter. A girl on marriage becomes a member of her husband's *okka* and widowhood by itself does not alter her legal status. She continues to be a member of her conjugal *okka*. In fact, if there are no heirs to her dead husband's *okka* she might be called upon to raise up seed for it by entering into '*okka parijé*' or '*makka parijé*' alliance. She is not permitted, however, to raise up seed for her natal *okka*. There was an instance of this in Nālknāḍ many years ago and it resulted in bitter hostility between the widow's natal and conjugal *okkas*.

593 596 Rights in a joint family are referred to as *sammanda*, and *sammanda* may be conferred or withdrawn. At marriage the bride acquires rights in the groom's house, and this is referred to as the

[1] Similarly, in the non-paddy season, men could cultivate small patches of land for ginger and turmeric. But they could only attend to them after they had done their share of the day's work on the ancestral estate.

596 generally well guarded in the use of proper expressions in their talk with the young. The educated men of the present day exercise a potent influence for good in the normal conversation, and show due respect to their [607] brother's wife with whom no familiarity is allowed. There is a tendency [173] at present among the discontented members to break up the ancestral family [578] by a division of the family property among the members.

Property and Disposal

423 The property of the Coorgs consists chiefly of the ancestral house
425 and the land belonging to it which under the Rajas was held on a feudal
177 tenure and on a light assessment termed *jamma bhumi* or birthright land, because it was inalienably vested in the family or house, and the British Government confirmed the settlement. Additional land was taken up by them on the *sagu* tenure, but, in course of time, Government allowed to some extent such *sagu* land to be converted into *jamma* land. Other land held as jagir was granted for certain Government service as *umbli* land on a light assessment. During the last thirty years, many houses have opened out coffee plantations on their own or Govern-
● 434 ment land, or rented cardamom jungles. Thus the actual wealth of the
421 Coorgs consists of landed property and their prosperity depends on the
596 exertions and means of cultivation; but imprudent enterprises and un-
[556] expected reverses have caused much embarrassment. Formerly, all the members of a Coorg house lived together in the ancestral home or in some outfarm, *koppu*, neither of which could be alienated nor subdivided among the members of the family. All of them worked for the common good under the management of the *yajamana* or *korakara*, and had their subsistence on the proceeds. Any surplus on the annual reckoning became
[433] the property of the house for providing incidental expenditure on the occasion of marriages, funerals, and other ceremonies, as also for the purchase of new land in the interest of the family. If, however, an individual member by becoming a salaried officer or by coming into possession of money through marriage, was enabled to enter upon private speculation without any aid from the ancestral house, any property or acquirements thus made became his private property and were left at his own disposal by gift or will. Many young men have thus become
[591] separated from the ancestral house and established a new homestead, and as long as they contributed to the expenses of the former, they maintained
[182] their share in the proceeds. This is the proper mode of setting up a new house. Disintegration is now setting in, and some try to break up the ancestral houses by a division of the landed property among the members.

Adoption

597 The right of adoption is given to every Coorg house in the absence of male issue, or by an unmarried man or woman or widower in order to secure the inheritance of personal property or rights.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

245 177 the Sampáji Ghat in 1855, Dr. Maxwell opened up the Perambadi Ghat estates in 1856, and in 1857 Mr. Kaundinya founded Anandapur village with a most promising plantation in the Bamboo district. Round these first centres of cultivation dozens of extensive estates sprang up within a short time. Every one who beheld a hill-side, covered with the rich, luxuriant coffee shrub was bewitched by its golden promises. Here seemed to have been discovered the Eldorado of honest industry in a delightful climate and home-like country! 474 245 177 434 Natives too, enriched by the sale of forest land, followed the example of the European planter, and opened up large estates; private and public companies were formed to embark in the lucrative speculation; forest land was to be had either from Government for the mere asking or by purchase from native holders. Cooly labour flowed in plentifully. Thousands of acres of the finest forest land fell under the planter's axe. Every new settler was hailed as a lucky fellow, whose lot was cast in pleasant places. Lacs of rupees were spent in the expectation of a cent per cent return. With the approach of the looked for fabulous income, the excitement rose apace. Envy had fixed an eye upon the fortunate planter;—but never before stood he more in need of pity and sympathy than at that time. A succession of bad seasons disappointed his prospects year after year; then the "Bug" infested the finest estates on the Sampáji and Perambadi Ghat, and scarcely had it left, when the terrible "White Borer," whose acquaintance we have already made, threatened to destroy the very foundation of his prosperity. There are but few planters who have as yet escaped either of these dire calamities, and their success makes the loss of others all the more felt. There is however no cause for despair. The soil and climate of the country seem eminently suitable for coffee cultivation. Coffee may yet succeed in Coorg and the undaunted planter may yet have his reward, if the method of cultivation, best

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

suited for each locality, is carefully adopted, and if with the increase of jungle vegetation, especially bamboos, better seasons may be expected to return and the "White Borer" to disappear. [245] [474] [434] [177]

The approved methods of coffee cultivation in Coorg are planting under shade and on the open ground, and an intelligent planter will be guided by his experience of the elevation, exposure, and amount of atmospheric humidity of his locality which method to apply. If shade-planting is decided upon, there is the choice between natural and artificial shade, and in either case due regard is paid to full light and free circulation of air. The former method is but the improved native way of planting already described. For artificial shade-planting the jungle trees are all removed and either burnt or—which seems to be better—piled up and allowed to rot, when of the spontaneous new growth, especially the Sponia Wightii or "Charcoal tree" which springs up like weeds, a sufficient number of trees is allowed to remain. More permanent shade-trees, however, are the jack tree, the Poinciana regia, Bauhinia, the mango tree etc., seeds of which are put down at regular distances on the plantation, and after 5 or 6 years the young trees offer already partial shade. Coffee trees on open ground, that require no shade owing to a moister atmosphere, are evidently in a more congenial habitat; they grow stronger, live longer and yield an earlier and successively more regular and larger crop than trees under shade. Some of the Sampaji Ghat-estates nearest Mercara are of this description and their present appearance leaves hardly anything to be desired in coffee planting.

The soil and elevation best suited for cardamoms is also best adapted for coffee cultivation, hence at first the desire to secure cardamom jungles for coffee plantations. [249]

After a piece of land has been cleared and regularly pitted with holes 18 inches cube and at a distance of 5 or 6 feet from each other, the surface soil is filled in and a peg fixed in the centre. With the first burst of the monsoon, the sturdy